

August 8, 2011

## CWA Misrepresents Verizon Contract Proposal

Recent press releases by the Communications Workers of America (CWA), issued yesterday and today, contained several misstatements regarding the nature and specifics of Verizon's union contract proposal. The inaccuracies are identified below, with Verizon's response highlighted in red to ensure the facts are accurately represented.

###

CWA Claim: "Verizon's demands include: gutting pension security, eliminating benefits for workers injured on the job, eliminating job security, slashing paid sick leave, and raising health care costs by up to \$6,800 per worker."

**VERIZON RESPONSE: Current employees will still receive the pension they've earned to date under Verizon's highly competitive proposal. Additionally, Verizon is not eliminating benefits for workers injured on the job. Under the prior agreement, the vast majority of union-represented employees received an unlimited number of sick days and free health care. Due to the decline in Verizon's wireline business, Verizon is proposing that workers receive a maximum of 5 paid sick days per year and pay a portion of their health insurance premiums. Contrary to CWA's claim, union workers would pay as low as \$1,380 per year for family coverage under Verizon's proposal. With respect to job security, businesses in decline cannot guarantee permanent employment.**

CWA Claim: "[CEO Ivan Seidenberg] is guaranteed free health for life, as is his wife."

**VERIZON RESPONSE: False. Neither active Verizon executives nor retired Verizon executives receive free retiree health care for life.**

CWA Claim: "'Companies like Verizon that make billions in profits have a responsibility to create good, American jobs, not outsource them overseas,' continued [CWA's Christopher] Shelton.

**VERIZON RESPONSE: As one of America's largest employers, Verizon is committed to providing solid middle class jobs in the U.S. The vast majority of union jobs in Verizon's wireline division include U.S.-based technicians who support and service U.S.-based businesses and residential customers.**

CWA Claim: Verizon is calling for these drastic cuts for its middle-class workforce despite

*both increasing profits and a workforce that has shrunk by 50% over a decade in its wireline division.*

**VERIZON RESPONSE: Wrong. Profits from Verizon's wireline business have declined dramatically due to increased consumer demand for wireless and Internet-based communication services. Today, Verizon spends \$4 billion annually on employee health care, and representatives of CWA's described "middle class" workforce in New York earn an average of \$91,000 in wages, with a benefits package valued at \$55,000. Faced with these realities, the company must make changes to its cost structure to remain competitive.**

*CWA Claim: "Verizon workers are waiting for management to demonstrate that it's ready to bargain. In fact, we're looking for Verizon to stop canceling bargaining sessions that have been scheduled."*

**VERIZON RESPONSE: False. Verizon has not canceled any bargaining sessions. The company has always been ready and willing to negotiate, and remains interested and available to do so.**